

Major Crimes Task Force and large crowd in attendance at PANIC Meeting

CAMMI CHANDLER
Wednesday, February 15, 2006

Spanish Fork Press

With over 300 parents, students and community members in attendance at the most recent PANIC meeting, held on Feb. 8 at 7 p.m. at the Spanish Fork Middle School, many questions were answered by the Major Crimes Task Force.

Also in attendance was a panel of five women, from the Payson Police Department and Utah County Sheriff's Office. "If there is a problem with substance abuse," said one member of the panel. "They need a place to get help." Ultimately it is up to the person to get help. The Utah Health Department has a list of Treatment Centers on their website. Major Crimes went over the changes in a dependent person, and that in order to be "normal" they need the drugs. Don't be afraid to ask questions and find out what is going on.

The best time to deal with the problem is now. They stressed to parents to find out what is in their rooms and know what they are doing. "Drugs steal your life before your life is over." One member of the audience asked, "How much of the crimes committed are contributed to drugs?" The panels answer: "An awful lot. Many steal items and return them to the store for money to pay for drugs." There are two things that will help your child say NO! The first is high self-esteem; anything you can do to help build self-esteem will help you say NO. The second is who they hang out with. Stand up for who you are, help your friends and peers say NO. Already have your mind made up so that the decision is easy if ever presented to you.

Members of the PANEL and Major Crimes Task Force include: Camille Larsen, Utah County Sheriff's Office; Phil Nielsen, SFPD Narcotic Officer; Jo Murphy, UCSO; Heidi Johansen, Dispatch; Mimi Sandoval, Payson Police Department; Staci Petro, UCSO Canine; Rob Riding, Detective UCSO.

If you are concerned that your child may be taking drugs, you can purchase drug tests at the District or at Spanish Fork High School. The next PANIC meeting will be held on March 15 at 7 p.m. at the Spanish Fork Middle School. This story appeared in Spanish Fork Press on page A1.